

Message Text

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43

ACTION SCSE-00

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 L-03 EB-07 OFA-01 SCA-01 H-02

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P 221645Z AUG 75

FM AMCONSUL MERIDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 766

AMEMBASSY MEXICO PRIORITY

UNCLAS MERIDA 0162

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC, ETTRN, MX (F/V MISS MERLE)

SUBJ: WRECK OF F/V MISS MERLE

MEXICO CITY FOR CCS, FISHATT, DAO

1. CAPTAIN WILLIAM EDWARD WELLS APPEARED AT CONSULATE AFTERNOON AUGUST 21 WITH THREE CREWMEN MATTHEW MAJEED BOOZ, JERRY CRAIG CROFT, AND SUZANNE PUCKETT, ALL U.S. CITIZENS. HE STATED THAT HE WAS MASTER OF F/V MISS OERLE, 73 FOOT SHRIMPBOAT, OWNED BY ART P. HAGAN, OF 6616 BLOXHAM ROAD, JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA. CREW

AND CAPTAIN ONLY INTERESTED IN OBTAINING DOCUMENTATION FOR RETURN TO U.S. WITH WHICH CONSULATE ASSISTED.

2. CAPTAIN WELLS STATED MISS MERLE HAD GONE INTO PORT OF CAMPECHE FOR SUPPLIES AND WAS ON THE WAY BACK TO SEA AUGUST 19 WHEN SHE BEGAN LEAKING BADLY. WITH APPROXIMATELY THREE FEET OF WATER ABOARD, THE CREW, WHICH INCLUDED THREE MEXICAN NATIONALS, PREPARED TO ABANDON SHIP. MEXICAN NAVAL VESSEL D-17 OUT OF CIUDAD DEL CARMEN WAS IN THE VICINITY AND PICKED UP CREW. MISS MERLE LAST SIGHTED AFTER DARK AUGUST 19 STILL AFLOAT. AFTER DETAINING CREW ON BOARD TWENTY-FOUR HOURS THE D-17 CARRIED ALL TO CAMPECHE.

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CAPTAIN WELLS AND THREE OTHER U.S. CITIZENS IMMEDIATELY TRAVEL-

LED TO MERIDA
TO OBTAIN AIR TRANSPORTATION BACK TO FLORIDA.
CAPTAIN IS IN POSSESSION ALL SHIPS PAPERS.

3. MISS MERLE WAS NOT OVERDUE IN RETURNING TO U.S. AND CREW
EXPECTS TO DEPART FOR U.S. IMMEDIATELY. THEREFORE NO NOTIFICATION
REQUESTED. CAPTAINS WIFE MRS DORIS WELLS, TAMPA, FLORIDA, HAS
BEEN INFORMED AS WELL AS OWNER ART HAGEN. INSURANCE ADJUSTOR

HORACE SCHMAHL OF FORT LAUDERDALECN , FLORIDA, HAS ALREADY
BEEN IN CONTACT WITH CONSULATE.

4. FOR DAO MEXICO CITY: ONLY WITNESS TO ACCIDENT OTHER THAN
MASTER AND CREW APPEARS TO BE MEXICAN NAVAL VESSEL D-17. CONSUL-
ATE HAS NO REASON TO SUSPECT CAPTAIN WELLS STORY BUT OFFICIAL
REPORT WILL SURELY BE REQUIRED BY OWNER AND INSURANCE ADJUSTORS.
POSSIBILITY EXISTS THAT MISS MERLE DID NOT SINK BUT DRIFTED
ASHORE OR WAS RECOVERED AND TOWEDBY ANOTHER BOAT. DAO RE-
QUESTED TO BEGIN PROCEDURES FOR OBTAINING OFFICIAL REPORT
FROM CIUDAD DEL CARMEN THROUGH SECRETARIA DE MARINA IN MEXI-
CO CITY.
ACKENBOM ACTING

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